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HISTORY

OF

BIRMINGHAM.

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"Birmingham is the Toy-Shop of Europe."

BURKE.

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1797.

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Brief History

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BIRMINGHAM.

PREFACE.

THE Author (or rather Editor) of this little work, had no other view in offering it to the public, than because he conceived such a thing was absolutely necefsary. There is scarcely any town in the kingdom, of the least significance, but what has something of the kind to guide the visiting or paſsing stranger, and refresh the memory of the inhabitant.

It may be justly called an Abridgment of Mr. Hutton's History of Birmingham. All the principal information is gained from that work, but it is no ways likely to injure it

either in its sale or reputation; *that* is calculated for the library, *this* will only beguile an idle hour, or serve the traveller to read at his inn, or in his carriage before he arrives at the end of the next stage.

The first idea of this publication was caught from a promise made by the celebrated Mr. Collins, to epitomize the History of Birmingham in verse. He began it in the newspaper which he has a share in conducting, and it is to be regretted that he has not yet resumed the subject; in the mean time this trifle starts into existence, to remove, if posſible, the deficiency occasioned by that gentleman not continuing the pleasing task.

As this little piece is incapable of standing the severe trial of literary criticism, it

is hoped its readers will pardon its errors, in whatever shape they may be found, and, if poſsible, let its intended utility controul its defects.

BIRMINGHAM, APRIL 24, 1797.

THE HISTORY OF BIRMINGHAM.

A TRUE explanation of the word BIRMINGHAM is almost unattainable from its remoteneſs—as it has been wrote Brumwycheham, Bromwycham, and various other ways; indeed now, in common conversation, it is more frequently pronounced Bromidgham than Birmingham. Dugdale supposes the name to have been given by the planter, or owner, in the time of the Saxons; but this may admit of endleſs dispute without the least utility.

The town lies near the centre of the kingdom, in the north-west extremity of the county of Warwick, in a kind of peninsula; it is in

the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, in the deanery of Arden, and in the hundred of Hemlingford. The superficial contents of the parish is 2864 acres.

As no part of the town lies flat, the showers promote both cleanlineſs and health, by removing obſtructions. The approach on every side is by aſcent, except that from Hales Owen; in fact, no place can be more peculiarly favoured with four of the greateſt benefits that can attend human exiſtence—water—air—the ſun—and a ſituation free from damps. Moſt writers upon Birmingham have viewed it as low and watery, becauſe Digbeth, the old chief ſtreet, bears that deſcription; but, within the preſent century, for one low ſtreet there has been fifty elevated ones added to the town.

There is not any natural river runs through the parish, but there are, in the lower parts of the town, two excellent ſprings of ſoft water, ſuitable for moſt purpoſes, one at the top of Digbeth, the other, Lady Well; and at the latter place are ſeven of the moſt complete baths

in the kingdom. They cost 2000l. in erecting, and are ever ready for the accommodation of hot or cold bathing, for immersion or amusement, with conveniency for sweating. That appropriated to swimming is 18 yards by 36, situate in the centre of a garden, in which are 24 private undressing houses, and the whole surrounded by a wall 10 feet high. They are kept by Mr. Belcher, whose assiduity is well known. There is also a chalybeate spring a mile from the town on the Coleshill road, whose water, Mr. Hutton observes, has but one defect, *it costs nothing*; but had it passed through a bed of malt instead of mineral, it would have drawn more attendants than the shrine of Thomas Becket, and they would have stoutly disputed for every rising drop.

With respect to the ancient state of Birmingham, we are left nearly in the dark. Conjecture has served to fill the place of certainty, for nothing like a history of it has been left us by our ancestors. No doubt but it has always been famous for its productions in iron ware; its situation, together with various vestiges and

traces, testify that the music of the anvil and hammer has played here these many centuries past.

Birmingham is not a place a gentleman would chuse to make a residence. Its continual noise and smoke prevent it from being desirable in that respect. Mr. Hutton observes, that gentlemen as well as buttons have been stamped here, but like them, when finished, are moved off. He has known the man of opulence direct his gilt chariot out of Birmingham, who first approached her an helpleſs orphan in rags. Many estates have been struck out of the anvil, valuable poſſeſsions raised by the tongs, and superb houses, in a two-fold sense, erected by the trowel.

We have among us several poor descendants of families, who anciently have stood upon the pinacle of fame in this neighbourhood, but they have mouldered away, and it now can scarcely be told where their greatneſs existed.

It appears upon record that, in 1251, William de Birmingham, Lord of the Manor, pro-

cured an additional charter from Edward the Third, reviving some decayed privileges, and granting others; among the last was that of the Whitsuntide Fair, to begin on the eve of Holy Thursday, and to continue for four days. At the alteration of the style, in 1752, it was prudently changed to the Thursday in the Whitsun week, that less time might be lost to the injury of the manufactories and the workmen. He also procured another fair, to begin on the eve of St. Michael, (which is commonly called the *Onion Fair*, on account of the great quantity of onions sold at the time,) both of which are at this day in great repute. The Horse Fair, which formerly was kept in Edgbaston-street, was, in 1777, removed to Brickiln-lane; and that for Beasts, which used to be in the High-street, into Dale-end, in 1769.

On the entrance to Birmingham, upon the London road, is a place called Camphill, from a battle, or a siege of the town, which took place there by Prince Rupert, in 1643. Our ancestors are reproached with virulence by Lord Clarendon for disloyalty to Charles the First. The day af-

ter the King left Birmingham, on his march from Shrewsbury, they seized his carriages containing the royal plate and furniture, which they conveyed, for security, to Warwick Castle. In 1643, the King ordered Prince Rupert, with a detachment of 2000 men, to open a communication between Oxford and York. In his march, at Birmingham, he found a company of foot kept for the Parliament, lately reinforced by a troop of horse from Lichfield; but supposing they would not resist a power of 10 to 1, sent his quartermasters to demand lodging, and offer protection. But the inhabitants having cast up slight works at each end of the town, and barricaded the leſser avenues, rejected the offer and officers, united themselves with the military, determined that the King's forces should not enter; but the numbers under the Prince overcoming their bravery, soon put them to silence, but he was obliged to proceed to Long Bridge before he could enter, on account of the deep and narrow road between Camphill and Deritend being choaked up by waggons and other carriages. A running fight continued through the town, and victory declared loudly for the Prince. The Earl of Denbigh, a

volunteer under him, being in close pursuit of an officer in the service of the Parliament, and both upon the full gallop up Shirland-lane, in the manor of Smethwick, the officer instantly turning, discharged a pistol at the Earl, and mortally wounded him with a random shot. The Parliament troops were animated in the battle by a clergyman, who acted as governor of the town, but being taken in the defeat, and refusing quarter, was killed at the Red Lion Inn. The Prince, provoked at the resistance, in revenge set fire to the town in Bull-street, and consumed several houses near the spot now No. 12.

In 1665, Birmingham was visited by the plague. The infection was caught by a box of cloaths brought by the carrier to the White Hart Inn. The church-yard was insufficient for the reception of the dead, who were conveyed to a waste piece of ground at Lady Wood Green, and from thence denominated the Pest-ground.

About the year 1700 the number of streets in Birmingham was nearly 30. It now consists of near 250, besides several of the oldest being

considerably improved and augmented. This will, in some measure, aſsist the idea in comprehending the amazing increase of the town in size, wealth, and manufactures, during that time; and it is no presumption to suppose, that it has not yet arrived at its zenith. It now contains nearly eighty thousand souls, and thirteen thousand houses, none of whose annual rents, it is supposed, exceed 90l. per annum, the Inns excepted.

The rage for building, previous to the present war, was exceſsive. It ruined many a responsible man, and very rarely did it answer the expectation of the proprietor. Sir Thomas Gooch poſsesses a considerable part of the ground upon which the town is built, and its products to him constitute the chief part of his income. It appears, by the poors books, that there are not 5000 houses that pay the parochial rates; whilst there are more than 8000 that do not. Hence we see what an amazing number of the laborious part of mankind are among us. This valuable claſs of the creation are the prop of the remainder.

Part of the riches, extension, and improvement of Birmingham are owing to the late John Taylor, Esq. who poſseſsed the singular power of perceiving things as they really were. He may justly be deemed the Shakspear or Newton of the place. He rose from minute beginnings to shine in the commercial hemisphere, as they in the poetical or philosophical. To this uncommon genius we owe the gilt button, the japanned and gilt snuff-box, with the numerous race of enamels; also the painted snuff-box, at which one servant earned 3l. 10s. per week, by painting them at a farthing each.—In his shops were weekly manufactured buttons to the amount of 800l. exclusive of other valuable productions, and eighty guineas was thought a small price for a single toy. He died in 1775, at the age of 64, after acquiring a fortune of two hundred thousand pounds. His son (the present John Taylor, Esq.) is now the first partner of one of the greatest Country Banking Houses in the nation, and was a considerable sufferer at the time of the Riots, in 1791.

The buttons, buckles, swords, and guns of Birmingham are in greater repute than those of any other place in the world, the fashions of which are for ever varying. Buckles, in particular, have sustained, of late, the most disgraceful insult. They have been replaced by the shoe-string; and it is not uncommon to see a *petit maitre* buckle-maker solicit orders for his articles with large bunches of black ribbon on his delicate feet. Ladies too univessally wear slippers. Thus a trade is become near its decay, which, if only supported by the purchase of one pair of buckles per year, by those who wear strings, would contribute towards the maintenance of thousands.

Within the present century, the manufacture of steel into every kind of toy and ornament, which can be imagined, took its rise. For brilliancy and elegance steel toys may vie with silver or gold, and a very large street bears the name of Steelhouse-lane, from the extensive works carried on there. There are also large brafs-works erected on the banks of the Canal, in the road to the Five Ways, near which stand

the ruins of the Mansion built by the late John Baskerville, one of the first printers in the world. He was born in Worcester in 1706; trained to a stone-cutter; but in 1726 became a writing-master in Birmingham. As painting suited his genius, he entered into the lucrative branch of japanning, and resided at No. 22, in Moor-street; but in 1745 he took a building lease of the ground upon which the house now stands, and gave it the name of Easy Hill. Here he continued a japanner for life. In 1750 his inclination for letters induced him to turn his thoughts to the press. He spent much time and money before he could produce one letter to please himself; and his first attempt was a beautiful quarto edition of Virgil, in 1756. He afterwards printed numerous books, which are well known, with more satisfaction to the literary than emolument to himself. His aversion to Christianity would not suffer him to lie among Christians: he therefore erected a mausoleum in his own grounds, for the interment of his remains, and died without issue, in 1775, at the age of 69. Many efforts were made, after his death, to dispose of his elegant types,

but, to the lasting discredit of the British nation, no purchaser could be found in the common wealth of letters: the Universities coldly rejected the offer—the London booksellers understood no science like that of profit—the valuable property therefore lay a *dead weight*, till purchased by a literary society at Paris, in 1779, for 3700l.

As Birmingham never made a glaring figure in the History of our Country, the article of Trade and the Riots of 1791 excepted, we will now begin to give a regular account of its government, public buildings, the most remarkable occurrences, &c.

There is at present three acting Magistrates among us, the Rev. Dr. Spencer of Aston, Wm. Villers, Esq. of Moseley, and Wm. Hicks, Esq. of Birmingham; and the Officers who are annually chosen to direct in the Town, are an High Bailiff, who inspects the Markets, and sees that justice takes place between buyer and seller, to rectify the weights and dry measures used in the Manor; a Low Bailiff, who summons

a Jury, and chuses all the other Officers: but the most important part of his office is, to treat his friends at the expence of about 70l.; two Constables, and one Headborough; two High Tasters, who examine the goodneſs of the beer, and its measure; two Low Tasters or Meat-connors, who inspect the meat exposed to sale, and cause that to be destroyed which is unfit; two Affeirers, and two Leather-sealers, whose offices are now only nominal.

Deritend being a hamlet of Birmingham, sends its inhabitants to the Birmingham Court Leet, at which all the above Officers are chosen, and sworn in; and the whole in the name of the Lord of the Manor.

In 1752, the inhabitants procured an act for the recovery of debts under 40s. (or Court of Requests,) constituting seventy-two Commiſsioners, three to be a quorum. They sit every Friday morning, for the dispatch of buſineſs, in a large room belonging to the Red Lion Inn. Two Clerks, constituted by the act, attend the Court to give judicial aſsistance: are

always of the law, chosen alternately by the Lord of the Manor and the Commissioners, and are continued for life. Once in every two years ten of the Commissioners are ballotted out, and ten other of the inhabitants chosen in their stead.

In 1790 the Humane Society was established here, for the recovery of persons apparently drowned; and, about the same time, a Commercial Committee, consisting of the first characters, was also instituted, to watch over the common interests of the place. In 1791, a market was opened, (by W. Villers, Esq. the High Bailiff for the time being,) to be held on every Tuesday, to supply the Town with hay, straw, &c.

In 1779 a public Library was instituted, and from a very small beginning has now acquired stability and the extensive collection of upwards of 8000 volumes; 25l. per annum is paid for a room, and 40l. per annum to a librarian. It now consists of about five hundred subscribers. An elegant pile of building is

now erecting for the institution in Cherry or rather Withering-street, the expence of which will not fall far short of 2000l.

A new Library commenced in 1796, and although in its infancy, it has above two hundred subscribers, and promises speedily to rival the old one.

There is also a Medical and a Law Library in the town, besides numerous private book societies. Reading is certainly become fashionable, but from what motives we will not enquire.

Of all the public buildings in the town, the places of worship should claim our attention first; and of these we shall begin with St. Martin's (or the old) Church. This building is encircled by one of the worst and most disagreeable church-yards in the kingdom; not the least beauty or symmetry can be perceived near it. No doubt, in ancient times, but it was extensive, but houses being built so close to the church, and that being the only receptacle for

the dead for several centuries, the church-yard is now become so elevated, that the inhabitants of these houses may be literally said to live among the dead. There is no document existing to prove when this church was built, but it is certain it was raised before the year 1300. The church is of stone, and the first on the premises; but, in 1690, it was thought necessary to case both church and steeple with brick, except the spire, which is both elegant and very high, and has been three times injured by lightning. Forty feet of it was taken down and rebuilt in 1781, with stone, and strengthened by a spindle of iron running up its centre, 105 feet long, secured to the side walls every ten feet by braces: the expence was 165l. 16s. 0d. Inclosed is a ring of 12 musical bells.

In the church are to be seen the arms and monuments of several great and ancient families, in particular under the south window, were two monuments a-breast, of white marble, much injured by the rude hand of time. The left figure is supposed to be William de Birmingham, who was made prisoner by the

French at the siege of Bellegard in 1297, in the time of Edward the First. He wears a short mantle, which was the dress of that time; a sword, expressive of the military order; and also bears a shield with the bend lozenge, which seems never to have been borne after the above date. The right hand figure, next the wall, is visibly marked with a much older date, perhaps about the Conquest: the effigy does not appear in a military character, neither did the Lords of that day. Even Westminster Abbey, famous for departed glory, cannot produce a monument of equal antiquity. There are several more monuments belonging to the Lords of the house of Birmingham.

In the church is an excellent organ, and in the steeple a set of very musical chimes that play a different tune every day of the week.

In the church also is a long list of donations given at different times, some very considerable and others very curious. In 1786 the church underwent a thorough alteration at the expence of 4000l. The vast number of grave-stones,

(which nearly covered the floor,) the arms, monuments, pews, pulpit, roof, and charities fell in one general ruin, and a very grand, though a dull piece of architecture, now displays itself.

The presentation of St. Martin's was vested in the family of Birmingham until 1537, since which it has pafsed through the Dudleys, the Crown, the Marrows, the Smiths, and now rests in the family of Tennant. The Rev. Charles Curtis, (brother of the London Alderman Curtis,) is the present rector. The rectory in 1291 was valued in the King's books at 5l. per ann. and in 1536 at 19l. 3s. 6d. The income is now upwards of 1000l. and is expected at the expiration of several leases granted by the church for different lands and houses to exceed 2000l. An anecdote told by the facetious Hutton of this church deserves a place here: during Cromwell's government, —— Slater, a broken apothecary, of this place, having been unsuccefsful in curing the body, resolved to attempt the cure of souls; he therefore, to repair his misfortunes, afsumed the clerical character, and cast an eye on the rectory of St. Martin's, but he had many power-

ful opponents; among others were Jennens, an iron master, poſſeſsor of Aston Furnace, (anciently an extensive iron-work a short distance from Birmingham,) Smallbroke, another wealthy inhabitant, and Sir Thomas Holt. However he with difficulty triumphed over his enemies, stept into the pulpit, and held the rectory till the restoration. Being determined in his first sermon to lash his enemies with the whip of those times —he told his people, "the Lord had carried him through many troubles, for he had paſsed, like Shedrach, Meshach, and Abednego, thro' the *fiery furnace*. And as the Lord had enabled the children of Israel to paſs over the Red Sea, so he had aſsisted him in paſsing over the *Smallbrooks*, and to overcome the strong *Holts* of sin and satan." At the restoration, suspecting the approach of the proper officers to expel him from the Parsonage-house, he crept into a hiding place under the stairs, but being discovered, was drawn out by force, and the place ever after bore the name of Slater's hole.

The church-wardens are chosen annually, from amongst the most respectable parishion-

ers.—The lecturer is the celebrated Dr. Croft, a man of great erudition, and a very popular author.

We now proceed to St. Philip's (or the new) church. This curious piece of architecture, the steeple of which is erected after the model of St. Paul's in London, but without its weight, does honour to the age that raised it and to the place that contains it. The well chosen spot on which it is built is the summit of the highest eminence in Birmingham, with a descent every way, and when it was erected there were not any buildings nearer than those in Bull-street. The land was the gift of Robert Phillips, Esq. from which it was named. This superb edifice was begun by act of Parliament in 1711, under a commiſsion, consisting of twenty of the neighbouring gentry appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese under his episcopal seal. Their commiſsion was to expire twelve months after the erection of the church. It was consecrated in 1715, and finished in 1719; and though it may be estimated at 20,000l. it only cost 5012l. for which there are three reasons: many of the ma-

terials were given, more of the carriage, and some heavy debts were contracted. The urns upon the parapet of the church, which are highly ornamental, were not fixed till 1756. The church-yard is one of the finest and most beautiful in the kingdom. It occupies 4 acres, ornamented with walks in great perfection shaded with trees in double and treble ranks, and surrounded with buildings in elegant taste. Perhaps its equal cannot be found in the British dominions. The steeple till the year 1751 contained a peal of six bells, which were then augmented to ten, at which time St. Martin's having only eight, could not bear to be outnumbered by her junior, therefore ordered twelve bells into the steeple. Two thousand people may be accommodated in this church, but it has contained near three thousand.

In the vestry is a theological library, bequeathed by the first rector, William Higgs, for the use of the clergy of the establishment in Birmingham and its neighbourhood, who also left 200l. for future purchase, which was afterwards made, and an elegant library-room erect-

ed adjoining the Parsonage-house, by the Rev. Spencer Madan, the present rector, in 1792, and is called the Parochial Library.

Under the centre of the church runs a vault the whole length, for the interment of those who chuse to pay an additional guinea. The organ excels; the paintings, mouldings, and gildings are superb. Whether the stranger takes an external or internal survey, the eye is struck with delight, and he pronounces the whole the work of a master. Its conveniency can only be equalled by its elegance.

Interment in the church is wisely prohibited, and there are but very few monuments in St. Philip's. The present is but the fourth rector, into which he was initiated in 1787. The benefice is worth about 300l. per annum.—The church-wardens are chosen annually.

We shall next treat of St. John's Chapel, in Deritend or Bordesley. This, though joining to the parish of Birmingham, is a chapel of ease belonging to Aston, two miles distant, founded

in the time of Richard the Second, in 1382. Time seems to have worn out that building, in the windows of which were the arms of Lord Dudley, and Dudley impaling Barckley, both Knights of the Garter, descended from the Somerys, Barons of Dudley Castle; also a whole figure of Walter Arden, Esq. of an ancient family, often mentioned Lord of Bordesley. The present building was erected in 1735, and the steeple in 1762. In 1777 eight very musical bells entered the steeple, together with a clock. The present chaplain is the Rev. John Darwall, whose income is about 100l.

St. Bartholomew's was built in 1749, on the east side of the town—will accommodate 800 hearers—is neat and elegant. The land was the gift of John Jennens, Esq. poſseſsor of a considerable estate in and near Birmingham. By the solicitation of Mrs. Weaman, Mrs. Jennens gave 1000l. and the remainder was raised by contribution to accomplish the building. Here is a very spacious chapel-yard, surrounded by houses, whose appearances cannot be boasted of. The steeple is very small but beautiful, and the chan-

cel has this singular difference from others, it veres towards the north instead of the east. The altar piece, which is elegant, is the gift of Basil Earl of Denbigh, and the communion plate (consisting of 182 ounces) that of Mary Carles. The present chaplain is the Rev. John Tayler, who is also a magistrate of the town. Income about 100l. per annum.

St. Mary's chapel was erected by act of Parliament in 1774, in the octagon form, in a very airy situation and taste. The land was the gift of the late Mary Weaman, in whose family is the presentation. She inducted the Rev. John Ryland, who is the present chaplain, and now also rector of Sutton Coldfield. The income is about 200l. The lecturer is the Rev. Edward Burn, justly celebrated for his extempore oratory. A lecture is delivered every Sunday and Wednesday evening at this place; and there is also a lecture for young people every Sunday morning, during the summer, at eight o'clock. An organ has been lately added to it. In general it overflows with auditors. It has a very extensive yard, with several good buildings adjoining.

St. Paul's Chapel was erected in 1779, upon a spot of ground given by Charles Colmore, Esq. upon the declivity of a hill not altogether suitable for the elegant building it sustains, which is of stone. Plain beauty unites with strength. The steeple intended for this beautiful edifice will do honour to the modern style of architecture, whenever money can be procured to erect it; and yet when we reflect that, in 1791, a beautiful painted window was placed over the communion table, representing the conversion of St. Paul, by that celebrated artist, Francis Eginton, for four hundred guineas, and also an organ, in 1795, for one hundred more—I say, if we reflect upon these, we shall immediately say, why was not that money expended towards a steeple and a clock? The latter would have been highly useful to the neighbourhood. The present chaplain is the Rev. William Toy Young, celebrated for two volumes of sermons, and other publications. Income about 200l.

Ashsted Chapel was the seat of Dr. Ash, a celebrated physician of Birmingham. His intellects became impaired, and his house, which

stood on a delightful eminence, was purchased by an attorney, who converted it into an elegant chapel, with an organ and a large band of choristers to chaunt the service, in 1789, and bankrupted himself. There are excellent wine vaults under, and on that consideration it may be valuable, but more so if well stored. It has been lately purchased by the Rev. Dr. Croft and other clergymen, who have engaged to officiate in it regularly. Since this chapel was opened, a vast number of houses have sprung up near it, and 'tis now become a very populous and genteel end of the town. This chapel may with great propriety be termed the Barrack Chapel—it adjoins the Barracks, and the troops constitute the *strongest* part of the auditory.

Having now noticed all the places of worship of the establishment, we proceed to those of the diſsenters, the first of which may be called the Old Meeting in Old Meeting-street. This was erected in the time of King William the Third, but this was sacrificed at the shrine of bigotry in the riots of 1791. The trustees recovered damages, at law, to the amount of

1390l. 7s. 5d. and a new meeting has been erected upon the spot of the former at the expence of about 5000l. It is a strong and beautiful building, and has a good organ and a large burying ground. The present pastors are the Rev. Radcliff Scholefield and the Rev. John Coates —the salaries are very handsome.

The New Meeting was erected in the year 1730, and was destroyed at the riots, and there is now nothing to be seen but the outside shell. The walls seem to stand as a monument of that memorable day. In 1780 the Rev. Mr. Hawkes declining the pastoral care, (he deceased universally regretted in 1796,) the congregation turned their thoughts towards the Rev. Dr. Priestley, one of the first philosophers of the age, now a voluntary exile from his native country through intolerance and persecution. He was pastor at the time of the riots, and was obliged to fly from his habitation at midnight, in disguise, to save a life valuable to mankind, without knowing his crime, or the cause for which he was near being sacrificed. It is curious to observe, that his text, the Sunday previous to the riots, was from

St. Luke, chap. xii. verse 19,—"And he said, "this will I do; I will pull down my barns and "build greater; and there will I bestow all my "fruits and my goods."—The trustees of the New Meeting having lost their licence, were debarred a suit for damages: the King was therefore *graciously* pleased, upon an application from Mr. Rufsel to Mr. Pitt, to grant a warrant upon the Treasury for 2000l.

The Union Meeting, in Livery-street, was formerly an amphitheatre for the exhibition of horsemanship, &c. but being unoccupied at the time of the riots, the two congregations of the Old and New Meeting entered upon it, and fitted it up for a place of worship, and from thence it is called the Union Meeting; but since the erection of the new meeting in Old Meeting-street, the two congregations have again separated, and that only of the New Meeting afsemble here, and they only till their meeting is rebuilt. The present pastor is the Rev. John Edwards, a young man of unrivalled powers as a preacher, and succeſsor to the late Rev. Mr. Blythe, lately deceased.

Carr's Lane Meeting is a scion of the old meeting transplanted in 1748. The building cost about 700l. and has since then been beautified with 700l. more. This society has been favoured with two donations, one the interest of 800l. by the will of John England, in 1771, and part of the profits of land, &c. situated in and near Walmer-lane, value 40l. 18s. per ann. bequeathed or assigned by John Scott, esq. in 1779, from thence called Scott's Trust. The late pastor, the celebrated Dr. Williams, resigned in favour of the Rev. Mr. G. Brewer, who is the present pastor.

The Baptist Meeting was founded in Cannon-street, in 1738. This society so rapidly increased that, in 1780, it was found expedient to enlarge and beautify it, at the expence of about 800l. The Rev. Samuel Pearce is the present pastor; a young minister of uncommon genius, and a very popular preacher.

The Quakers Meeting is a large convenient place, situated in Bull-street. The congregation is very flourishing, rich, and peaceable, and is

worthy the imitation of other religious sects. The building is plain both inside and out, and behind is a large burying ground.

The Methodists or John Wesley's people are here very numerous. Till 1782 there was but one congregation, which assembled at a cast-off theatre in Moor-street, and then they erected a superb meeting house in Cherry-street, at the expence of 1200l. This was opened on July 7, 1782, by John Wesley, their chief priest, whose extensive knowledge and unblemished manners gave us a tolerabie idea of apostolic purity. Since that time they have erected and made three other meeting houses, one in Coleshill-street, another in Deritend, and the third was built for the Swedenbourgians, but sold and purchased by the Methodists, who now posses it.

The Roman Catholics formerly enjoyed a place for religious worship near St. Bartholomew's Chapel, still called Mashouse-lane, but the rude hands of irreligion destroyed it. There was none nearer than Edgbaston, two miles distant, till 1789, when a very neat chapel was erected at

Easy Hill, and the duties are now performed by the Rev. Mr. Nutt and the Rev. Mr. Hawley.

The Jewish Synagogue is in the most miserable street in the whole town, call'd the Froggery. The place is small but generally filled. Their whole apparatus, if we may judge, has the appearance of poverty.

Besides the places of worship for diſsenters already mentioned, are the following: a Baptist meeting in Bond-street, a branch of the Cannon-street society—the pastor is the Rev. John Edmunds, an eccentric preacher. An Independent meeting in Paradise-street—the pastor is the Rev. Robert Little, a young man of fine genius, although not educated for the ministry. An Independent meeting in Oxford-street—the pastor the Rev. Thos. Hasker. Lady Huntingdon's meeting in King-street, formerly the Theatre, on which stage many a capital performer of Garrick's school has appear'd—the congregation is scarcely sufficient to keep the pastor in his ministerial office. The Antinomian meeting in Bartholomew-street, whose late pastor was the Rev. John

Bradford, B. A. of Oxford, (lately *translated* to London,) who was formerly of the establishment. And lastly, the New Jerusalem Temple in Newhall-street: they commenced about the year 1790, in a very elegant and superb building; its equal for magnificence was never seen in Birmingham; but in the course of a year they lost their *Hands*, and the flock dispersed—the elegant temple was sold to the Methodists, and they have since erected a neat but small place three doors above—the pastor is the Rev. Joseph Proud, a man of great genius, and whose delivery is equalled but by few.

The next subject shall be the places of amusement, and we begin with the Theatre. The first erected one in the town was in Moor-street, about 1740, and in a few years became a meeting house. The theatre in King-street was built about 1765, and considerably enlarged and improved in 1774; that is also become a meeting house. In 1774 a most elegant one was erected in New-street; it cost 5660l. and was managed with very great succefs by Yates, the celebrated comedian, till 1791, in the month of August of which year it

was wilfully set fire to and burnt down to the ground, together with all the scenery, dreſes, &c. The conflagration was dreadful, and altho' great rewards were offered the incendiaries were never discovered. The proprietors, willing to improve their former plan, purchased several of the adjacent houses, and in the compaſs of four years erected perhaps the most commodious and superb theatre of its size in the three kingdoms, at the expence of 14000l. It will contain an audience of 2000 people. In the centre of the building, to the front, is a convenient aſsembly room, besides the Shakespear Tavern, the first in the town. We are amused in the summer by London performers, under the management of Mr. Macready, of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden. As a manager he is indefatigable and spirited in the extreme, and in the course of two short seasons has introduced upon our stage most of the principal London performers—his succeſs has been great, but not more so than his exertions deserve.

Aſsemblies, concerts, and music meetings are held weekly in the town, during the winter,

at the Shakespear and Hotel taverns, and at Crefshull's afsembly room.

There are a variety of public gardens and bowling greens, the first of which is Vauxhall, which was formerly named Duddeston, and was the seat of the Holts, several portraits of which family may be seen there, also Spring Gardens, situate near to the floodgates in Deritend, and are supposed to be the most pleasing places of the kind out of London. There are too many others to enumerate singly.

There are three places in the neighbourhood to which parties are continually making excursions, viz. Enville, the seat of Lord Stamford, eighteen miles distant, Hagley twelve miles, and the Leasowes six miles from Birmingham. Three spots more delightful are not to be found in England.

The Hotel was erected in 1772, by a Tontine subscription. It has an elegant entrance through a spacious saloon, at the extremity of which the eye is struck with a grand flight of

stairs, which lead into a magnificent aſsembly room.

The town is annually disgraced with three wakes or riots, viz. Deritend, Chapel, and Bell Wakes. The first took its rise at the erection of Deritend Chapel; the second at that of St. Bartholomew's; and the last in consequence of ten bells being hung in St. Philip's steeple. Drunkenneſs and riot are the chief amusements.

In almost every public house in Birmingham are clubs of different kinds. The sick clubs are highly beneficial, and the nature and extent of clubs in general are fully known.

A circumstance which will please an antiquarian as much as any thing in the town is, that Ikenield-street, one of the four great Roman roads, comes within a mile of Birmingham. It rises near Southampton, proceeds nearly north, and croſses the Birmingham road to Bromsgrove, enters Birmingham parish by the Observatory in Lady Wood Lane, croſses the Dudley road at the Sand Pits, along Worstone Lane and Hock-

ley Brook, where it quits the parish, and terminates itself upon the banks of the Tine, near Tinmouth in Northumberland. In Sutton Park and Coldfield, about four miles from Birmingham, part of this road is to be seen in some places as perfectly complete as on the first day the Romans made it; and one of the principal evidences of the antiquity of Birmingham is, that it was a station for two of the Roman roads, viz. Ikenield and Shirley Streets. The latter comes within four miles of the town.

The Lordship of the Manor was in the family of the Birminghams till 1537, when it was villanously obtained by the Duke of Northumberland. The Manor-house then was what is now called the Moat, and is the manufactory of Mr. Francis. It was then thought a delightful spot, and the family of the Birminghams, who had enjoyed it for centuries, was expelled from that and the Manor as follows. John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, an ambitious wretch, was poſsesſor of Dudley Castle. He wished to add Birmingham to his vast domain. Edward Birmingham therefore was privately sounded

respecting the disposal of his Manor, but as money was not wanted, and as the place had been the honour and residence of his ancestors, it was out of the reach of purchase; but Northumberland determining to posſeſs it, accomplished his design thus. He procured two or three rascals to take up their quarters for a night or two in Birmingham, and gain secret intelligence when Edward should ride out, and what road. This done, one of the rascals was to keep before the others, but all took care that Edward should easily overtake them. Upon his arrival at the first claſs, the villains joined him, and entered into chat, and all moved soberly on till they reached the first man, when on a sudden the strangers with Edward drew their pistols and robbed their brother villain, who no doubt lost a considerable sum after a decent resistance. Edward was easily known, apprehended, and committed as one of the robbers. The others were not to be found. Private hints were given him, that the only way to save his life was to make Northumberland his friend, and this probably might be done by resigning to him his Manor, with which Edward reluct-

antly complied. Notwithstanding this, Edward was brought to trial, and found guilty. The place where this diabolical transaction happened is in the middle of Sandy Lane on the Sutton road, near the north-east corner of Aston Park Wall. The family is now extinct. The Earl of Lowth is a descendant of a branch only of the family; the Bracebridges are descended from it by a female line; and Sir John Talbot Dillon is descended from the ancient Earls of Lowth. The old castle followed its Lords, and is buried in the ruins of time. Upon the spot sixty years ago rose the present house, occupied by Mr. Francis. In one of the outbuildings is shewn the apartment where the ancient Lords kept their court leet. The trench of water has the appearance now as it had a thousand years ago.

Near the place where the small rivulet discharges itself into the Moat, another of the same size is carried over it, and proceeds from the town as this advances towards it, producing a curiosity seldom to be met with, one rivulet running south and the other north for half a mile, yet only a path-road of three feet asunder. It

is called Pudding Brook; respecting which a curious circumstance took place about four years since, when the rage for navigation shares ran so high. An advertisement appeared in one of the Birmingham papers, signifying an intention of making a navigable cut from the Moat, along Pudding Brook, to Carpenter's Mill, (lefs than two miles distant from the town,) situate in the county of Worcester. A day was fixed for the meeting, at a tavern in Birmingham. It was meant only as piece of waggery, as the idea of a navigation at that time was sufficient to bring speculators from all parts. Several persons came from a considerable distance to be laughed at, and the affair ended entirely to the satisfaction of the company.

The Square is the spot where formerly stood a Priory. Some small remains of the old foundations are yet visible in some of the cellars about the Square. The outbuildings and pleasure grounds occupied the whole north-east side of Bull-street, about fourteen acres, and must at that time have been a beautiful eminence. It was erected about the year 1280. Large quantities

of human bones have been dug up in the Minories, which proves it to have been the burial place of the Priory.

Some of the streets of Birmingham are kept in repair by emoluments arising from small estates left by William Lench in the time of Henry the Eighth. It is called Lench's Trust, and there are sixteen inhabitants who are appointed members to administer the same. The same Lench erected the Alms-houses at the bottom of Steelhouse Lane, for the benefit and residence of poor widows.—There are also three other trusts, viz. Fentham's, Crowley's, and Scott's. The first is 100l. per annum, left in 1712, for teaching poor children to read, (they are kept in the Blue Coat Charity School, and cloathed in green,) and for cloathing ten poor widows of Birmingham. The second is six houses left by a lady of that name, in 1733, the annual rents of which are for the purpose of supporting a school of ten girls. Scott's Trust has been already mentioned.

The Free School stands upon a spot where, in 1383, was erected a building called *the Gild*

Gild of the Holy Croſs. It was endowed with lands in order to maintain two priests, who performed divine service to the honour of God, the Virgin Mary, the Holy Croſs, St. Thomas, and St. Catharine. But, says Mr. Hutton, "in the days of Henry the Eighth, 1536, when it was the faſhion of that day to multiply deſtruction againſt the religious and their habitations, the annual income of the Gild was valued by the King's random viſitors at the ſum of 31l. 2s. 10d. out of which three priests who ſung maſs had 5l. 6s. 8d. each; an organiſt 3l. 13s. 4d.; the common midwife 4s.; the bellman 6s. 8d. for informing the brotherhood when the ſpit ceaſed to turn; with other ſalaries of inferior note. These lands continued in the Crown till 1552, the 5th of Edward the Sixth, when at the humble ſuit of the inhabitants they were aſſigned to eighteen governors, who after their death were to be replaced by their ſucceſſors, and annually choose a Bailiff from their own body. They erected a Grammar School, which was taken down in 1707, and made way for the present ſpacious building, and in 1756 a ſet of urns were placed upon the parapet, which conſiderably

relieved the view of it, which at best is dull and heavy. The tower is in a good taste, except being rather too narrow in the base, and is ornamented with a sleepy figure of Edward the Sixth, dressed in a royal mantle, with the ensigns of the garter, holding a bible and sceptre. Over the school presides a chief master with an annual salary of 120l.; a second master 60l.; two ushers; a master in the art of writing, and another in that of drawing, at 40l. each; a librarian 10l. (who has the care of a choice collection of classic and other authors;) and seven exhibitioners at the University of Oxford at 25l. each." Five, six, or seven years of the most precious part of the life of a youth is thought but a short time to instruct him in the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues. The present chief master is the Rev. John Cooke, (a florid preacher,) the emoluments of which place, together with the salary, is said to be worth 300l. per ann.

The Blue Coat School was erected in 1724, in St. Philip's Church-yard, but raised to its present magnitude in 1794, at the expence of 2500l. The annual income is 1327l. and educates

about 150 boys and 40 girls in the arts of reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, sewing, knitting, &c. At the front is the figure of a boy and girl in the habits of the school, and executed with a degree of elegance that would have done credit to a Roman statuary. Behind the apartments is a large area, appropriated for the amusement of the children, and the greatest decorum is preserved by a governor and governefs, both single, with afsistants. It continues to increase rapidly. Sermons are preached twice a-year at all the churches and chapels, after which collections are made, besides the annual voluntary subscriptions. Several legacies have been left to this institution, and the Lord of the Manor of Birmingham Heath has lately granted a lease of four acres of land, for the term of 99 years, at one shilling per annum, for its benefit.

The Difsenters Charity School was established about fifty years since, upon nearly the same plan as the former, now consisting of about 40 boys and 20 girls. It was situated adjoining the Old Meeting, but on the first evening of the riots, apprehensive that it might suffer

the same fate as the meeting, and be destroyed, the poor affrighted children ran naked from their innocent beds to preserve their lives. It would have moved the most ferocious heart to have seen them wandering at midnight in the street naked and unprotected, who a few hours before were sheltered and supported by the hand of Benevolence. Deeds were committed that night, sacred to *Church and King*, that would have raised a blush on the cheeks of a French Septemberizer. In 1791 a building was purchased in Park-street for the accommodation of the scattered objects of this charity, and improved at the expence of 1200l. Sermons are preached at each meeting, after which collections are made. There are also annual voluntary subscriptions.

The Workhouse was erected in 1733, at the expence of 1173l. The left wing, called the Infirmary, was added in 1766, for 400l. and the right for a place of labour, in 1779, at the expence of 700l. more. The number of persons depending upon this weekly charity is nearly 7000. It first commenced with only two over-

seers, but the increasing magnitude of the town, the large number of paupers, and other occasions, has raised the neceſsity of twelve, six of which are chosen every half year. The levies are sixpence in the pound, and annually amount to about 17,000l. Several trials have been made to introduce different manufactures into the Workhouse, but have been attended with very little succeſs.

There is no town in England, great or small, so badly provided with a market-place as Birmingham. The different articles are scattered in as many different places, and no regularity prevails; for instance, corn is sold by sample in the Bull-ring; the eatable productions of the garden in the same place; butchers stalls occupy Spiceal-street: one would suppose a narrow street was preferred that no customer might be able to paſs by; flowers, shrubs, &c. at the ends of Philip, Bell, and Moor-streets; beds of earthen and crockeryware lie in the middle of the foot-ways; the beast market is kept in Dale-end, and that for pigs, sheep, and horses, in New-street; cheese in open yards in Dale-end and High-street; and fruit, fowls, and butter, are sold in all parts of the town.

The Shambles are a disgrace to any place whatever: they are a receptacle for lewd women and thieves at night, and vermin.

The Welch Crofs is attended as a Saturday's market. It was built about the begining of this century, and bears its name from standing upon the Welch road. Its upper room is appropriated for a military guard-house, but is of little use in that respect since the erection of the Barracks.

The General Hospital, or at least the shell of it, which is a plain but noble edifice, was erected in 1766, upon a situation very unsuitable for its elegant front, in a dirty lane, with an aspect directing up the hill, which should ever be avoided. The two ample wings were added in 1791, at the expence of 3016l. It is supported by annual voluntary subscriptions. Frequent large bequests find their way to this valuable institution. Hundreds recover health and strength here, which otherwise must have perished. Many of the physicians and surgeons of the town give their attendance and afsistance gratis, and it is impofsible to discover a place where more humanity prevails.

There are two prisons, one at the bottom of Peck-lane, dark, narrow, and unwholesome within, crowded with dwellings, filth and distress without, by means by which the circulation of air is prevented. It is kept by Mr. Thomas Wooldridge. The other is in Deritend, and is very little better than the former, kept by Mr. Joseph Tart.—N. B. Both are licenced public houses.—As a town so populous is so wretchedly provided with so necessary an evil, an airy and pleasant spot should by all means be sought for within the town, to render the disagreeableness of confinement as little injurious as possible. Our prisons fall as much under the censure of the philanthropic Howard, in his Lazaretto, if not more so, than any others in the nation.

Since the fashion of making canals has of late so much prevailed, it is natural to suppose that Birmingham has not been behind hand in those concerns. The following may suffice as a short account of that particular part of its history.—An act was obtained in 1767 to make a canal between Birmingham and the coal delps about Wednesbury. The necessary article of coal,

before this act, was brought by land at double the price of what it is now. It was common to see a train of carriages for miles, to the great destruction of the roads and the annoyance of travellers. This duct is extended in the whole to about 22 miles in length, till it unites with the Staffordshire Canal, which, croſsing the island, communicates with Hull, Bristol, and Liverpool. The expence was about 70,000l. divided into shares of 140l. each, of which no man can purchase more than ten, which in 1782 sold for about 370l. per share, and in 1792 for 1170l. They annually increase in value. The proprietors took a perpetual lease of six acres of land of Sir Thomas Gooch, Bart. at 47l. per annum, which is converted into a wharf, in the front whereof a handsome office is erected for the dispatch of buſineſs. The boats are nearly all alike, constructed to fit the locks, of which there are a great number, which prove very inconvenient. They are drawn by one horse, and carry about 25 tons on an average. Several canals have been opened since the above, (particularly to Worcester and Warwick, which are nearly completed,) and have all terminated to

the benefit of the public and the interest of the adventurers. There's no part of the island but goods may be convey'd to it from Birmingham by water.

The Crescent will consist, when finished, of a superb range of 23 stone houses, elevated upon a terrace 1182 feet long and 17 high. The centre front is 622 feet and each wing 140, exclusive of a return to each towards Cambridge-street which is 141 more. Only twelve houses are finished, chiefly in the wings, which cost 10,500l. The remainder, which are to cost 200,500l. are now at a stand, owing to the war, which has completely damped the spirit for building.

Barracks (says Mr. Hutton) are the fashionable productions of the day.—Perhaps this military nursery was intended to preserve the chastity of the soldier, long in jeopardy; or, to separate him from the inhabitant, which tends to make two interests, when, in reality, there is but one; or, perhaps, from a principle of œconomy, the cry of every man in power who runs into debt.

Government took a lease of five acres of land adjoining the north side of the town (late the property of the *Holt* family, now that of *Legge*) at a penny a yard; and in 1793 erected the Barracks, at the charge of 13,000l. They will accommodate 162 men.

As the man who loves his country will rejoice at every saving system to lighten the load of three hundred millions, I shall state the account with precision.

	£.		
Annual rent - - -	100	0	
Interest upon 13,000l. - -	650	0	
Loss of principal per annum on the average during the lease of 80 years - -	162	10	

Perhaps there will not, at a medium, be more than two thirds of 162 men, or 108 accommodated. We may reasonably suppose 6000l. will be expended, at least, during the term, in wear and tear of furniture, alterations and repairs of buildings. This principal also of 6000l. and half the interest, which is 150l. per ann. must be sunk. When all these numbers are added together, it will appear that every man's lodging stands the country in about elevenpence a night,

or six shillings and fivepence a week. Half this sum united to the slender pay of the private soldier, would recruit the army with *men* instead of old age and children, and that without pressing or purchase; the landlord would then welcome the soldier with a smile, whom he now receives with a frown.

There are several good Inns in Birmingham, the most considerable of which are Hart's Hotel and Swan Inn, the Castle Inn, and the Hen and Chickens Inn, all situate in the High-street, from the two first of which coaches to and from all parts of the kingdom pass daily; and many others, viz. the Dog, Saracen's Head, George, White Hart, Red Lion, Chain, &c.—A very elegant building is nearly finished in New-street, for an Inn, intended to be occupied by Mrs. Lloyd.

Near Birmingham are three very extensive breweries, one by Mr. Richards, in Deritend, for ale only; another by Mess. Giles & Forrest, in Worstone-lane, for ale and porter; and the third is the Britannia Brewery near Walmer-lane. The latter is the largest concern of the kind in

the kingdom, London excepted, and is supported by Mr. Clay, (the celebrated japanner to His Majesty,) and a company of other very respectable gentlemen: the building is very elegant and commodious, and erected at a vast expence. Ale and porter of such excellent quality are produced at the above places, and delivered to any part of the town and neighbourhood at such a moderate expence, that very few inhabitants, except publicans, are at the trouble of brewing.

The Soho, two miles only from Birmingham, where almost every thing is manufactured, is celebrated all over the world. It far exceeds any place in Europe for its amazing and various productions in the arts. The proprietors are Messs. Boulton & Watt, men of the first genius. Earth, air, fire, water, every element and region are by them explored, and their wonderful engines and mills are to be seen throughout the kingdom.

Among the curiosities of the town we must not omit to mention Hockley Abbey, the residence of the ingenious Mr. Richard Ford. It is

situated near Mr. Boulton's Soho, and was erected about 30 years since. Its front has a very Gothic appearance, part of the upper building seems quite decayed, and the deception is every way worthy the taste of its poſſeſſor; it is surrounded by beautiful grounds and walks, interspersed with fanciful curioſities. Mr. Ford is a very ingenious ſmith. He had the honour, a few years ſince, of preſenting His Majeſty with a chariot made by himſelf entirely of iron, in conſequence of which he is always graciouſly received at court.

If, as Mr. Burke eloquently expreſſes himſelf, Birmingham is the toy-ſhop of Europe, the ſhop of Meſſ. Richards, in the High-ſtreet, (if we except the ſhow-room at Soho,) is certainly the toy-ſhop of Birmingham; for the elegance of its appearance and the multiplicity of its valuable articles it is ſcarcely equalled. When the Prince and Princeſs of Orange were here in 1796 they were much delighted with this ſhop, as they equally were with Mr. Clay's celebrated japan manufactory, whoſe beautiful japanned paper tea-trays, bottle-ſtands, buttons, &c. &c.

exceed any others of the kind for duration and excellence, the whole made of common brown paper. His show-room is a sight worthy beholding. The noble emigrants likewise visited Meſs. Clarke & Ashmore's (late May) whip manufactory, in the Bull-ring, which is very extensive, and curious throughout; also Mr. Gill's sword, bayonet and gun manufactory: this is supposed to be the first of the kind in the world—he makes vast quantities for our own and other governments, of such excellent quality that, in skilful hands, they cannot fail of succeſs. There are in the town several other manufacturers of guns, pistols, &c. for military and sporting uses, one of the principal makers and merchants of which is Mr. Samuel Galton; his productions in this line traverse every part of the globe. The manufacture of destructive instruments has at least one good effect, it produces employment to thousands.—Mr. Biſſet's Museum in New-street is much frequented by the curious: there is constantly on sale, or for inspection, several thousands of the most fanciful and beautiful paintings on glaſs, in petrifaction and ornamental frames, with variety of other curiosities.

Two newspapers are printed here, one is Aris's Birmingham Gazette, published every Monday morning by Mr. Thomas Pearson: it has perhaps the most extensive sale of any provincial paper in the kingdom, and far exceeds most others in the number of its advertisements. The other is Swinney's Birmingham Chronicle, and Warwickshire and Staffordshire Advertiser, published every Thursday morning by Messrs. Swinney & Collins. The latter gentleman is the celebrated BRUSH, well known for his true wit and good humour, such a fund of which he possesses, that the people of Birmingham and its neighbourhood draw upon him for a variety of weekly amusement, through the medium of this paper. It may be proper to remark, that both these papers are highly *Constitutional!* —— Mr. Swinney also carries on a considerable Type Foundry, (the only one in the kingdom *out* of London,) which has been very much improved within the last few years, and bids fair to rival the most celebrated ones in that curious art.

As this work cannot be complete without some account of the riots, that part shall be

copied from Mr. Hutton, whose brevity on the subject is exactly suitable to this publication.

These unhappy riots, which began on Thursday, July 14, 1791, have astonished all Europe, as a shameful attack upon private property, which, in all civilized nations, is held sacred. They were a disgrace to humanity, and a lasting stigma on the place. About eighty-one persons of various denominations having met at the Hotel to celebrate the anniversary of the French Revolution, the mob collected, and broke the windows. They went afterwards to the New Meeting (Dr. Priestley's) which they burnt; then to the Old Meeting, which also they left in ashes. From thence they marched to the Doctor's house, about a mile from town. Here his valuable furniture, with a more valuable library, and, what is most to be regretted, his philosophical apparatus, and manuscrips, together with the extensive buildings, ended in flames.

Friday, July 15, began with the conflagration of the mansion of John Ryland, Esq. at Easy hill. And while one mob was consuming

Bordesley Hall, the elegant and costly residence of John Taylor, Esq. another was destroying my house,* stock in trade, books, and furniture.

Saturday the 16th, began with burning my other house and furniture at Saltley, two miles distant. Next, the beautiful residence of George Humphrys, Esq. fell a prey to rapine; also that of William Ruſsell, Esq. of Showell Green, ended in a blaze. Moseley Hall, the property of John Taylor, Esq. next felt their vengeance. This was occupied by Lady Carhampton, mother to the Dutcheſs of Cumberland. But neither the years of this lady, being blind with age, nor her alliance to the King, could protect it. She was ordered to remove her furniture, and "if she wanted help, they would aſsist her." She was, therefore, like Lot, hastened away before the flames aroſe, but not by angels. They next carried the faggot to the Rev. Mr. Hobson's, and burnt his all; then to Mr. Harwood's, whose house was

* Mr. Hutton's.

licenced for public worship; then plundered that of the Rev. Mr. Coates; and also those of Mr. Hawkes, and Thomas Ruffell, Esq.

Sunday the 17th, was ushered in with burning of King's-wood meeting-house; the parsonage-house, with that of Mr. Cox, licenced for divine service. Returning nearer Birmingham, they plundered Edgbaston Hall, the residence of Dr. Withering; and attacked that of Mr. Male. But hearing in the evening that a troop of light horse was near, they silently mouldered away.

The damage, by this outrage, was more than 60,000l. An act was obtained in 1793 to reimburse the sufferers.

So far Mr. Hutton.—The riots were defended by one party, and deprecated by the other, in numerous disputes. The war quickly succeeded the riots, and no town in the kingdom has felt more of its dire effects: it has been nearly the destruction of its manufactures and commerce, has caused many hundreds of its principal tradesmen to fail,

thinned its inhabitants, trebled the number of its paupers, checked its industry, and left in it about 1500 empty houses, taxes and poors rates increase, trade and commerce decreases. This account is a dreadful one, but let an impartial reader examine it, and rejoice if he detects an error.